

SPEAKERS BIOGRAPHIES

April Frazier-Camara is the Director of Leadership and Professional Development at the National Legal Aid and Defender Association (“NLADA”). She is a nationally recognized trainer in the area of leadership, holistic defense, diversity and inclusion, and criminal justice reform.

Prior to joining NLADA, April worked as a community public defender at the Public Defender Service for the District of Columbia, which is widely recognized as the national model for quality public defense. She later served as the Special Assistant in the Juvenile Defender Unit at the Law Office of the Shelby County Public Defender where she was responsible for implementing Department of Justice reforms and helping to build the first-ever holistic and team-based juvenile defense practice in Shelby County that employed both social workers and attorneys. She also has experience working on national policy reform at the American Bar Association in Washington, D.C. and Legal Action Center in NY.

She is a leader within the American Bar Association currently serving as vice-chair of the ABA Criminal Justice Section and member of the ABA Women in Criminal Justice Taskforce. As a former co-chair of the ABA CJS Diversity and Inclusion Committee, she was responsible for the creation and implementation of the CJS Diversity and Inclusion Fellowship Program. She is also the co-founder of the new Black Public Defender Association, which is a membership section of the NLADA. April is a graduate of Tennessee State University and Howard University School of Law.

Lindsay Watts has been a practicing attorney in Mississippi since 2005. Born and raised in Jefferson Davis County, she attended the University of Southern Mississippi where she graduated with honors in 2002. Following graduation, she attended the University of Mississippi School of Law, obtaining her Juris Doctorate in 2005 and graduating *cum laude*. While at Ole Miss, Lindsay was Executive Articles Editor of the *Mississippi Law Journal*, a member of Moot Court Board and earned three (3) Outstanding Student Awards for the highest grade in her class. She was also a participant in the University’s Criminal Appeals Clinic, representing criminal defendants in their appeals to the Mississippi appellate courts.

After law school, Lindsay joined Young Williams, P. A. in Jackson, Mississippi where she practiced a combination of civil litigation and transactional work. During her tenure in Jackson, Lindsay was an active member of the bar, serving on the Young Lawyers Division Board of Directors as a representative of Hinds County and held various positions with Jackson Young Lawyers. In 2007, Lindsay was awarded the Outstanding Service Award by Jackson Young Lawyers due to her dedicated service.

In 2010, Lindsay joined the law firm of Bryan Nelson, P. A. in Hattiesburg where she continued her private practice. In 2012, after practicing law for seven (7) years, she was awarded an AV Preeminent rating by Martindale Hubbell, the highest peer review rating awarded, demonstrating professional excellence through the highest ethical standards and legal ability.

In 2014, Lindsay joined the District Attorney’s Office for the Fifteenth Circuit Court District as an Assistant District Attorney. In her position, Lindsay prosecuted special victim’s cases across the five (5) county district. In 2017, Lindsay made the decision to join the Pearl River County Office of the

Public Defender as a full-time assistant public defender. In 2018, Lindsay was appointed by Senior Circuit Judge Prentiss Harrell as the Public Defender of Pearl River County, Mississippi.

Erin Elizabeth Briggs is an Assistant State Public Defender at the Mississippi Office of State Public Defender. She has been an appellate public defender in this office since 2008. A native of Jackson, Mississippi, she is a proud 2003 graduate of Jackson State University and a 2006 graduate of the University of Mississippi School of Law. Following law school, she served as a judicial law clerk to Chief Judge Leslie D. King of the Mississippi Court of Appeals. Erin is married to Micah Briggs, a middle school teacher. Erin and Micah are the parents of Micah Jr., Maleah, Josiah, Jeremiah, Kassidy and Uriah Briggs. The couple resides in Pearl, Mississippi.

Chareka Gadson hails from Killeen, Texas. She completed her undergraduate studies at Howard University in Washington, DC. She pursued and received her Juris Doctor from Texas Southern University's Thurgood Marshall School of Law in Houston, Texas. After running a successful general law practice in Texas, Attorney Gadson relocated to Jackson, Mississippi to be closer to her family. While in Jackson, Attorney Gadson was able to fulfill her desire to serve as an Assistant Public Defender, servicing the community connected to her family's roots.

Kelsey L. Rushing a native of Carthage, MS., received both his B.S. Degree in Political Science in 1994 and his Master's Degree in Political Science in 1996 from USM. He is a 1999 Graduate of Cumberland School of Law at Samford University.

He is a staff attorney with the Capital Defense Counsel for the Office of State Public Defender. Prior to his position with OSPD Kelsey worked in various areas of civil litigation for over 10 years, and has served as Municipal Court Judge for the City of Canton. Additionally, he served as a contract public defender for Warren and Yazoo counties.

Terun Moore is an activist for returning citizens. Originally sentenced to life without parole, Terun Moore was paroled in 2017 from Marshall County Correctional Center after having served 19 years in adult confinement. Prior to his release, he completed his General Equivalency Diploma and graduated from several educational programs, including the University of Mississippi's Entrepreneurship course. Terun is currently enrolled at Hinds Community College as an undergraduate student. He is the author of "Positive Quote Wednesdays" which can be found on Facebook at the People's Advocacy Institute. He sits on the Mayor's Police Officer-Involved Shooting Taskforce, the Democratic Visioning transitioning committee, and is helping to develop a Violence Interruption/Credible Messenger program in partnership with the City of Jackson.

Terun is a strong family man, he is happily married to his wife, Chauniqua Moore. He is also committed to healing his community of violence and poverty by being a positive voice for change and mending trust issues within the community.

Ilham Askia is executive director of Gideon's Promise, a nonprofit public defender advocacy organization that provides training, leadership development and mentorship to improve the quality of legal representation for the clients and communities they serve.

In this capacity, Askia has oversight of the organization's daily operations, annual budget, strategic plan, personnel, fundraising, board development, and regulatory compliance. She is also responsible

for maintaining the infrastructure that supports the programs and services that distinguish the organization as the only public defender advocacy organization that supports public defenders at every career stage. The organization's five major programs are executed in partnership and for the benefit of 40 public defender offices and 25 law schools across 27 states and the U.S. Virgin Islands. In five years, Askia moved the organization from an annual revenue of \$800,000 to \$2 million. She has also raised \$3.8 million in government and foundation grants and \$789,000 in corporate and philanthropic sponsorship to date.

Askia has been featured by media outlets that include *Essence*, *Black Enterprise*, *Atlanta Magazine*, *Share International Magazine*, Atlanta's NPR, and the legal podcast *Service Roads: Conversations on the Law and Social Justice*. She regularly speaks at law schools, community organizations and national criminal justice conferences to discuss the critical role of public defenders. Notably, Askia has been a speaker at Atlanta's John Marshall Law School, SMART on Crime Innovations Conference, National Association For Public Defense Conference, Florida A&M Law School, Social Justice Community Foundations, Federal Defenders Conference, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People Legal Defense Fund Capital Training Conference, Public Defender Service for District of Columbia, Mercer Law Review Conference, and Southern Christian Leadership Conference Summit, to name a few.

She also speaks on the impact the criminal justice system has on families. Prior to her leadership of Gideon's Promise, Askia was an educator in Washington, D.C. and Atlanta, GA. During her tenure, her students were routine examples of over-policing in marginalized communities, the school-to-prison pipeline as well as the negative outcomes derived from legal representation provided by poorly trained public defenders with overwhelming caseloads. The latter being a lesson she learned earlier in life when both her father and brother were sentenced to prison.

Askia and Gideon's Promise has won numerous awards including, but not limited to, Sisters United Atlanta's Humanization Icon Award, Atlanta Hawks Most Notable Atlantan, WNBA Atlanta Dream Inspiring Woman Award; Stephen B. Bright Public Defender Award, Emory University's Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Service Award, Southern Center for Human Rights' Gideon's Promise Award, The National Association of Sentencing Advocates and Mitigation Specialists Sentencing Project Award and the American College of Trial Lawyers Emil Gumpert Award. The organization also served as the inspiration for the award-winning HBO documentary *Gideons Army*. She is also a member of Leadership Atlanta and the Society of International Business Fellows.

Askia earned a Master's of Early Childhood and Elementary Education from Trinity University in Washington D.C. and a Bachelor of Science degree in City & Regional Planning from Cornell University in Ithaca, New York.

She resides in Atlanta, Georgia with husband Jonathan and children Aaliyah and Lucas.

Victoria Valencia Washington attended Tougaloo College in Jackson, MS where she received her Bachelor of Arts in English with a minor in Pre-Law. After that, she worked at Chastain Middle School, where she taught English and coached basketball. After spending time in DC interning with the Committee on Homeland Security, she decided to pursue law school. She received her Juris Doctor degree from the University of Mississippi School of Law in Oxford, MS. While there she worked with the Innocence Project and participated in the University's Criminal Appeal's Clinic.

After graduating law school in 2014, she spent her first year clerking in the Sixth Judicial Circuit Court District. After her clerkship, she accepted an opportunity to work in private practice for two years in North, Mississippi. In January 2018, she started her firm, The Washington Law Firm, PLLC, in Southaven, MS. She currently serves the North Mississippi community and surrounding areas. Her legal practice consists of public defense work in federal, circuit, and youth courts. She also maintains her private practice.

Peter J. Clarke received his Bachelor of Arts in Psychology from Hofstra University in Hempstead, New York in 1989. After working for a few years following graduation, Attorney Clarke moved to Houston, Texas to attend the Thurgood Marshall School of Law (TMSL) at Texas Southern University, where he obtained his Juris Doctorate, *Cum Laude*, in 1996. While at TMSL, Attorney Clarke competed on the school's National Moot Court team. Following graduation, Attorney Clarke clerked with the Honorable Carl E. Stewart, Circuit Judge (Chief Judge 2012-2019), for the United States Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals in Shreveport, Louisiana.

After his clerkship, Attorney Clarke returned to Houston and established the law firm of Clarke & Associates. His firm practices in the areas of plaintiff's personal injury, contracts, civil litigation, arbitration and mediation. In 2010, Attorney Clarke became a registered Contract Advisor for the National Football League's (NFL) Player's Association, where he represented football players entering or who were already established in the NFL. Attorney Clarke has been a certified mediator since 2004 and an arbitrator since 2001, where he has served on numerous arbitration panels and rosters, including the U.S. Postal Service/NALC/APWU/NPMHU panels, Southern District of Texas and the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Services rosters.

Attorney Clarke has been a former guest Professor of Law at TMSL, lecturer for the Sports & Entertainment Law Society at TMSL, and a lecturer at the Texas State Bar Minority Attorney Program. Attorney Clarke has been or is currently a member of the Texas State Bar, American Bar Association, National Bar Association, Houston Lawyers Association, Texas Trial Lawyers Association, and the Trial Lawyers College. Attorney Clarke, a Brooklyn, New York native, has four siblings and numerous nieces and nephews.

Rick Jones is the Executive Director and a founding member of the Neighborhood Defender Service (NDS). He is a distinguished trial lawyer with 30 years' experience in multi-forum litigation, a lecturer in law at Columbia Law School and a faculty member of the National Criminal Defense College in Macon, GA.

Rick is the immediate past President of the National Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers (NACDL). At NACDL he served as co-chair of both the Special Task Force on Problem-Solving Courts and the Task Force on Restoration of Rights and Status After Conviction. Both of these efforts resulted in the publication of ground breaking reports and continuing reforms. He also held the inaugural NACDL Presidential Summit on Race Matters in Detroit and followed it up a year later with the Race Matters II conference in Los Angeles.

Rick is an internationally recognized expert in public defense. He has been invited to speak at events hosted by the United Nations and serves on the Board of Trustees at Fair Trials International and as the Vice Chair of the Board of Directors at the International Legal Foundation (ILF). Rick has worked with defense offices in West Africa and South America and has addressed the past two

International Conferences on Access to Legal Aid in Criminal Justice Systems, in Argentina and Georgia. He also spoke at the first-ever Conference on Effective Legal Aid Delivery Models, held in India. ILF invited him to travel to Nepal in an effort to help sustain, strengthen and institutionalize the public defense function in their newly created constitutional government.

Rick is a commissioner on the New York State Council on Community Re-Entry and Reintegration. He is an inaugural member of the steering committee of the National Association for Public Defense, sits on the boards of the New York State Defenders Association and the Sirius Foundation and serves on the Editorial Board of the Amsterdam News. He was appointed to the Advisory Board of the National Task Force on Fines, Fees, and Bail Practices.

Jacqueline A. Fleming, LCS, LCMHT is a Licensed Clinical Social Worker and Licensed Clinical Mental Health Therapist and currently serves as Director of Social Services at Mississippi State Hospital, a state psychiatric program, in Whitfield, Mississippi. She has over forty years of experience as a professional social worker in the field of mental health. Her experience includes work with children and adults with mental illnesses (MI) and/or intellectual or developmental disabilities (IDD) in an inpatient setting and community setting. Ms. Fleming has also worked as a mitigation specialist assisting attorneys in developing mitigation themes in preparation of death sentence cases from gathering records, reviewing records, interviewing defendants and their family members and preparing life stories.

Seth Steed is the Managing Attorney of the Criminal Defense Practice at Neighborhood Defender Service of Harlem, and he also teaches at Columbia Law School.

Seth previously worked in the Conviction Integrity Unit of the Bronx District Attorney's Office where he investigated claims of actual innocence and wrongful conviction. In the last six years Seth has been involved in exonerating eight innocent people. Seth also worked in the Criminal Appeals Bureau of The Legal Aid Society. Seth is a graduate of Swarthmore College and Washington and Lee University School of Law.

David Miranda has been a public defender since 2009. He first started as a civil defense attorney at the Bronx Defenders where he focused on collateral issues arising out of criminal justice contact such as termination of tenancy proceedings for public housing, forfeiture hearings, and preserving public benefits. He then went on to a criminal practice and is currently with Neighborhood Defender Service of Harlem ("NDS"). David is a Senior Arraignment Attorney for NDS. As an Arraignment Attorney, David's work focuses on arguments for release, bail appeals and writs.

Rukia Lumumba is a legal professional, human rights advocate and transformative justice strategist, Rukia is the daughter of the late Mayor Chokwe Lumumba and human rights advocate Nubia Lumumba. She is executive director of the People's Advocacy Institute for transformative justice in the South, co-coordinator of the Electoral Justice Project of the Movement for Black Lives, and co-managed the successful Committee to Elect Chokwe Antar Lumumba for Mayor of Jackson, Mississippi. She has spent most of her career creating programs that address racial disparities, end mass incarceration, redefine and transform our approach and response to crime and challenge the need for prisons. She is a community member and legal professional committed to bringing forth a new system of governance that builds equity, cooperation, worker democracy, and environmental sustainability to provide meaningful living wage jobs, reduce racial inequities, eliminate mass

criminalization/incarceration and build community capacity. She currently co-leads the Jackson People's Assembly as a model for community-led governance. She is a graduate of Howard University School of Law and Tougaloo College

Toscha DuBose is a native of Moss Point, MS where she grew up with her family and still currently resides. She is the second eldest of her siblings. Toscha is currently an investigator with the 19th Judicial District Public Defender's Office where she quickly moved from being a legal assistant to her current position as Investigator. Toscha is a member of the National Defender Investigator Association. Previously she was the Court Clerk for the City of Moss Point Municipal Court where she spent over a decade supervising and managing the municipal court services in the city. Toscha is a graduate of William Carey University, where she received a BS in Business Administration. Toscha is the proud mother of her only child Nyaia Liddell who is currently a sophomore at Tougaloo College where she is majoring in Biology. Toscha is a self-driven professional woman who values helping others and strives to instill those values in her daughter Nyaia. In her spare time, Toscha enjoys spending time with her family, her friends, her grandson Bentley and her lovable Cocker Spaniel named Doretoz.

Reginald Jones received his certification from the Mississippi Law Enforcement Training Academy in 1993. He has worked for State Capitol Police (1990 - 1995), served as Campus Police Chief at Hinds Community College Academic and Technical Center (1995 - 2003), and worked for the Mississippi Department of Corrections Probation and Parole (2006 - 2013). He presently works for the Hinds County Public Defender's Office as an Investigator.

Reginald is a graduate of Murrah High School (1984), and served in the United States Navy (1985 - 1988). He received his AA in Criminal Justice in 2004 from Hinds Community College, and went on to received his BA in Criminal Justice in 2006 from Jackson State University. Reginald holds a national certification in Criminal Defense Investigation from the Department of Public Advocacy located in Faubush, KY (2015).

He is a member of T.C. Almore Lodge #242, Jackson Consistory #117, St. John Commandery #3, Stewart Phillip #46A, Rissah Temple #130, and a member of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity Inc.

Aisha McWeay is the Executive Director of Still She Rises, the first holistic defender office in the country dedicated exclusively to the representation of mothers in the criminal and civil legal systems. Aisha is a career public defender and indigent defense advocate. Prior to taking over the Executive Director role at Still She Rises in February 2019, Aisha received her J.D. from Vanderbilt and joined the Nashville Defenders as an Assistant Public Defender in 2009. She became the General Sessions Division Chief in 2014 and in April 2017 was appointed the Deputy Public Defender for Nashville-Davidson County. Aisha graduated summa cum laude from Clark Atlanta University, where she majored in Mass Communications with a concentration in Public Relations. She has served in a number of training and mentoring capacities to public defense and community service organizations nationally. In recognition of her contributions to the public defense community, in July 2017 she was awarded the Stephen B. Bright award from Gideon's Promise.

Judge Latrice Westbrook of Lexington was sworn in as a member of the Mississippi Court of Appeals on Jan. 3, 2017. She was elected Nov. 8, 2016, to Court of Appeals District 2, Position 2.

Judge Westbrook was born in Memphis, Tennessee. She earned a Bachelor of Science degree from Austin Peay State University in Clarksville, Tennessee. She earned a law degree from the University of Detroit Mercy School of Law in 1997. She was admitted to the Mississippi Bar that same year.

She became an assistant district attorney in the Second Circuit District of Harrison, Hancock and Stone counties in October 1997. She was the first African American woman assistant district attorney in the Second Circuit District. She joined the Jackson law firm of Byrd and Associates in 2000, then opened her own law practice in 2001, representing clients in both criminal and civil matters.

She served as prosecutor for the city of Durant and as city attorney for the town of Isola. For nearly 10 years, she served as a public defender in Holmes County. In 2013, she became interim communications director for Jackson Mayor Chokwe Lumumba, then joined the Jackson City Attorney's office as legal counsel for the Jackson Police Department. She returned to private law practice in 2014. She served as Municipal Judge for the city of Lexington before she was elected to the Court of Appeals.

She has worked in conjunction with the Magnolia Bar Association, One Voice, the NAACP, the Mississippi Center for Justice, the Southern Poverty Law Center's Mississippi Youth Justice Project and the ACLU. She served as a Southeast Regional and Central Director of the Magnolia Bar Association. She previously chaired the Criminal Justice Committee for the State Conference of the NAACP. She is a member of the Mississippi Bar, Magnolia Bar Association, American Bar Association, National Bar Association, the National Conference of Black Lawyers, the Capital Area Bar Association and the Metro Jackson Black Women Lawyers Association. She is a former member of the Mississippi Association for Justice and the Mississippi Public Defenders Association. She is a life member of the NAACP, Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc. and Women for Progress MS, Inc. She is a past board member of Leadership Greater Jackson Alumnae, the I.S. Sanders YMCA, and the National African American Student Leadership Conference held at Rust College from 1997 - 2010.

On May 19, 2017, Judge Westbrook was named Outstanding Woman Lawyer of 2017 by the Mississippi Women Lawyers' Association. Judge Westbrook is a resident of Lexington, Mississippi. She is a member of Cade Chapel M.B. Church.